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Obituary

Professor Emeritus

Dr. Tatsuo Ooi (1924 - 2002)



Professor Dr. Tatsuo Ooi, Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University passed away on September 25, 2002 in Kyoto.

Dr. Ooi was born on September 16, 1924 in Nagano. He entered the Department of Physics, Faculty of Science, Nagoya Imperial University in 1944 and was moved up to the Graduate School of Science, Nagoya Imperial University in 1947. After the graduation, he was appointed to an Instructor in the Department of Physics, Nagoya University in 1953, promoted to an Associate Professor in 1961, and got a Ph. D. (Doctor of Science) from Nagaya University in that year. He was promoted to a full Professor of the Institute for Chemical Research, Kyoto University in 1968 to direct the Laboratory of Physical Chemistry of Enzymes (presently the Laboratory of Biopolymer Structure, Division of Molecular Biology and Information I). From 1985 to 1987, he held concurrently a Professor of a newly founded laboratory, the Laboratory of Molecular Design of Physiological Functions (presently the Laboratory of Bioknowledge Systems, Bioinformatics Center). He did a lot of works in biophysical researches on structures of biological macromolecules such as proteins and DNAs and in computational analyses of DNA sequences. He also did his best to introduce an electronic computer to the Institute and served as the first head of the Central Computer Facility in the Institute. He retired from Kyoto University in 1988, honored with the title of Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University. After the retirement, he moved to the Faculty of Home Economics, Kyoto Women's University as a full Professor in 1988. From 1993 to 1996, he served as the chief librarian in the University. He retired from Kyoto Women's University in 1998.

Dr. Ooi's research field was concerned with biophysics. He contributed largely to the development of biophysics by producing lots of achievements in biophysical

researches, especially in theoretical and experimental studies on structures of biological macromolecules such as proteins and DNAs. One of his superior works was the development of the two-dimensional distance map, so-called "Ooi map", which has been used to visualize three-dimensional structures of proteins. He also exerted himself to make the DNA database and to develop computational programmes for DNA analysis, and established the foundation of DDBJ, the DNA databank of Japan.

He made every effort to found the Biophysical Society of Japan and led the International Conference of Biophysics, held in Kyoto in 1978, to success as the chairman of the executive committee. From 1980 to 1981, he served as the president of the Biophysical Society of Japan to do his best in developing the biophysical field in Japan and internationalizing the Society. He also contributed largely to the development of the research field by holding international symposia many times. For his great academic and educational contributions, Dr. Ooi was awarded the Third Class of the Order of the Rising Sun in November, 2002.